

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Transitive verbs are those words which require an object to make complete sense. For example – I ate an apple, where ‘ate’ is the transitive verb and ‘an apple’ is the object. Any verb that does not need an object to make sense is called an intransitive verb. For example – I can’t think right now, where ‘can’t think’ is the intransitive verb. Transitive and intransitive verbs are important parts of English grammar. They help us understand how actions are performed and how they relate to other parts of a sentence.

Transitive Verbs

- Transitive verbs are action verbs that require a direct object to complete their meaning.
- They answer the question "what" or "whom" received the action.
- For example, in the sentence "She ate the apple," the verb "ate" is transitive because it directly affects the object "the apple."
- Transitive verbs often show specific actions or interactions between subjects and objects.

Intransitive Verbs

- Intransitive verbs, on the other hand, do not require a direct object to complete their meaning.
- They typically express actions, occurrences, or states that do not need a receiver.
- For example, in the sentence "He sleeps," the verb "sleeps" is intransitive because it does not require a direct object to complete its meaning.

Intransitive verbs often describe actions or states that occur without impacting something or someone directly.

1. The researcher analysed the statistical data meticulously.
2. The concept evolves as scholars delve deeper into the subject.
3. The theory remains unproven despite extensive research.
4. The professor explained the methodology in detail during the lecture.
5. The trend emerged as a significant finding in the study.
6. The author cited several sources in the literature review.
7. The committee reviewed the proposal thoroughly before making a decision.
8. The idea originated from a discussion at the academic conference.
9. The scientist conducted experiments to test the hypothesis.

The data suggests a correlation between variables.

Special Cases

Verbs with Multiple Meanings Some verbs can be either transitive or intransitive because they have multiple meanings. When used in the context of physical movement, run is intransitive.

1. I ran every day when I was an athlete.
2. I run every morning to stay in shape.

In the context of guiding or overseeing a company or other group of individuals, run is transitive.

1. Joe runs his own restaurant.
2. Martha ran her business efficiently.

Verbs in Different Contexts Verbs can also be either transitive or intransitive depending on context. The verb sing is normally intransitive.

1. I sing rather poorly.
2. She sings quite beautifully.

Sing is only transitive if the sentence answers the question, “What did the subject sing?”

1. I sang “Don’t Stop Believin’” rather poorly last night.
2. She sang “I Will Always Love You” quite beautifully last week.

Activity

Determine if the italicized verb in each sentence is transitive or intransitive.

1. Ron Burgundy has been gossiping since early this morning.
2. Jack White founded The White Stripes.
3. I lived in Las Vegas for a very brief period.
4. I make an excellent shrimp stir-fry.
5. Michael Simon gave an outrageous speech yesterday.
6. Stephen Curry slipped on his way to the basket.

In academic writing, the choice between transitive and intransitive verbs depends on the specific context and the level of precision or generality required to convey the intended meaning accurately. By selecting the appropriate verb type, writers can enhance the clarity, coherence, and effectiveness of their prose. Read the following functions of Transitive and Intransitive verbs in academic writing.

Transitive verbs	Intransitive verbs
<p>Transitive Verbs for Specific Actions: In academic writing, transitive verbs are often used when describing specific actions that involve a direct object. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The researchers analysed the data." • "The study examined the effects of climate change on biodiversity." • "The professor explained the concept in detail." 	<p>Intransitive Verbs for General States or Processes: Intransitive verbs are suitable when discussing states, processes, or actions that do not require a direct object. They often convey a more general sense. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The phenomenon persists despite efforts to mitigate it." • "The population grew rapidly during the study period." • "The theory evolved over time."
<p>Transitive Verbs for Concrete Results or Findings: When presenting concrete results, findings, or outcomes, transitive verbs help specify what was achieved or observed. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The experiment confirmed the hypothesis." • "The survey identified key trends in consumer behaviour." • "The analysis revealed significant correlations between variables." 	<p>Intransitive Verbs for Abstract Processes or Phenomena: In contrast, intransitive verbs are useful for describing abstract processes, phenomena, or changes without necessarily specifying direct outcomes. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The concept emerged as a central theme in contemporary literature." • "A pattern of behaviour emerged from the data." • "Trends in globalization have emerged in recent decades."
<p>Transitive Verbs for Clear Explanations or Actions: Transitive verbs are often preferred when providing clear explanations or describing actions taken by specific agents. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The committee proposed a new policy." • "The author formulated the research questions." • "The government implemented new regulations." 	<p>Intransitive Verbs for Passive or Descriptive Statements: Intransitive verbs can be effective in passive or descriptive statements, where the focus is on the action itself rather than who or what is performing it. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The results were interpreted differently by various scholars." • "The phenomenon remains poorly understood." • "Changes occurred gradually over time."

Now that you understand various contexts where Transitive and Intransitive verbs can be used, form a few sentences for each to practise the concept.

1. The research team proposed a new methodology for the experiment.
 2. Despite our efforts, the problem remained unresolved.
 3. The scientist analysed the data using advanced statistical methods.
 4. A new theory emerged from the discussion during the conference.
 5. The explorers discovered a hidden treasure in the ancient ruins.
 6. The sun appeared above the horizon, signalling the start of a new day.
 7. The government implemented new policies to address the issue.
 8. The mysterious disappearance of the artifact puzzled archaeologists.
 9. The artist created a masterpiece that captivated audiences worldwide.
- Over time, the small startup developed into a successful multinational corporation.

Exercise 1 – Identify the transitive and intransitive verb

Go through the sentences and identify the transitive and intransitive verbs.

1. I like all of Katy Perry's songs.
2. New Delhi is the capital of India.
3. Billie Eilish is a singer.
4. Will built a doll house for his eight-year-old daughter.
5. I ate a sandwich for breakfast.
6. All of them danced at my wedding party.
7. The mosquito bat does not seem to be working.
8. No tomato is ripe.
9. Sherin bought a phone for her mother.
10. The teapoy broke all of a sudden.
11. Noel brought a bottle of wine for dinner.
12. Srilakshmi and Vinod love watching feel-good movies.
13. The footballs and basketballs are kept in the third cupboard.
14. They purchased a new TV.
15. Heera lost her favourite black bag.
16. It *was* raining until a few hours back.
17. There are exactly 150 juice packs.
18. The cat chased the mouse around the house.
19. The doctors helped the patients in need.
20. Marley found the solution to the problem.

Answers for Exercise 1

1. I *like* all of Katy Perry's songs. – Transitive Verb
2. New Delhi *is* the capital of India. – Intransitive Verb
3. Billie Eilish *is* a singer. – Intransitive Verb
4. Will *built* a doll house for his eight-year-old daughter. – Transitive Verb
5. I *ate* a sandwich for breakfast. – Transitive Verb
6. All of them *danced* at my wedding party. – Intransitive Verb
7. The mosquito bat *does not seem* to be working. – Intransitive Verb
8. No tomato *is* ripe. – Intransitive Verb
9. Sherin *bought* a phone for her mother. – Transitive Verb
10. The teapoy *broke* all of a sudden. – Intransitive Verb
11. Noel *brought* a bottle of wine for dinner. – Transitive Verb
12. Srilakshmi and Vinod *love* watching feel-good movies. – Transitive Verb
13. The footballs and basketballs *are kept* in the third cupboard. – Transitive Verb

14. They *purchased* a new TV. – Transitive Verb
15. Heera *lost* her favourite black bag. – Transitive Verb
16. It *was raining* until a few hours back. – Intransitive Verb
17. There *are* exactly 150 juice packs. – Intransitive Verb
18. The cat *chased* the mouse around the house. – Transitive Verb
19. The doctors *helped* the patients in need. – Transitive Verb
20. Marley *found* the solution to the problem. – Transitive Verb

Exercise 2 – Fill in the blanks with transitive verbs

Read through the following sentences and fill in the blanks by choosing the most appropriate transitive verb from the list given below.

(wrote, designed, carries, know, bought, find, likes, baked, had, gave, watch, will be meeting, repaired, prescribed, brought, have, wagged, bring, made, sang)

1. We _____ chapati and kurma for dinner.
2. I _____ the answer to that question.
3. The teacher _____ Riyana the class leader.
4. When I came back from Ethiopia, I _____ some keepsakes for my friends and family.
5. They _____ doubts about it.
6. Lea _____ this saree for me.
7. My friends _____ me an unexpected gift for my birthday.
8. Tina _____ ‘You are my reason’ at my wedding.
9. Where can I _____ a newspaper?
10. Did you _____ the movie?
11. The little girl _____ having mangoes after every meal.
12. The dog _____ its tail on seeing its owner.
13. The doctor _____ some medicines for my fatigue.
14. The captain _____ new jerseys for all the players.
15. Tessa _____ a cake for her mom’s birthday.
16. Rakesh _____ my computer.
17. Swetha _____ an umbrella in her bag everyday.
18. I _____ a letter to my best friend.
19. Can you _____ me a glass of water?
20. She _____ her friends tomorrow.

Answers for Exercise 2

1. We *had* chapati and kurma for dinner.
2. I *know* the answer to that question.
3. The teacher *made* Riyana the class leader.
4. When I came back from Ethiopia, I *brought* some keepsakes for my friends and family.
5. They *have* doubts about it.
6. Lea *designed* this saree for me.
7. My friends *gave* me an unexpected gift for my birthday.
8. Tina *sang* ‘You are my reason’ at my wedding.
9. Where can I *find* a newspaper?
10. Did you *watch* the movie?
11. The little girl *likes* having mangoes after every meal.
12. The dog *wagged* its tail on seeing its owner.
13. The doctor *prescribed* some medicines for my fatigue.
14. The captain *bought* new jerseys for all the players.
15. Tessa *baked* a cake for her mom’s birthday.
16. Rakesh *repaired* my computer.
17. Swetha *carries* an umbrella in her bag everyday.

18. I *wrote* a letter to my best friend.
19. Can you *bring* me a glass of water?
20. She *will be meeting* her friends tomorrow.

Exercise 3 – Fill in the blanks with intransitive verbs

Check out the following sentences and fill in the blanks with the most suitable intransitive verbs from the list given below.

(was feeling, cried, is, feel, will be going, looks, are, is not working, will walk, goes, was, suits, ran, lives, will stay, acted, will wait, yelled, sneezed, sat)

1. It _____ great.
2. Today _____ Monday.
3. These books _____ interesting.
4. The little girl _____ excited to see the number of gifts she had received on her birthday.
5. I _____ exhausted.
6. Gina's friends _____ weirdly.
7. The new manager _____ in Whitefield.
8. My brother's laptop _____ properly.
9. Niya _____ to work by bus tomorrow.
10. Srinivasan _____ for a walk every evening after work.
11. This colour _____ you well.
12. I _____ here until you come back.
13. Veena _____ every time she saw me.
14. He _____ in a very comfortable position.
15. Binoy _____ to catch the bus.
16. Dileep _____ the whole day.
17. Sushil _____ the moment he smelt the flowers.
18. I _____ with you to the bus stand.
19. Tharik _____ lonely and sad.
20. My father _____ at me because I broke the glasses.

Answers for Exercise 3

1. It *looks* great.
2. Today *is* Monday.
3. These books *are* interesting.
4. The little girl *was* excited to see the number of gifts she had received on her birthday.
5. I *feel* exhausted.
6. Gina's friends *acted* weirdly.
7. The new manager *lives* in Whitefield.
8. My brother's laptop *is not working* properly.
9. Niya *will be going* to work by bus tomorrow.
10. Srinivasan *goes* for a walk every evening after work.
11. This colour *suits* you well.
12. I *will stay* here until you come back.
13. Veena *smiled* every time she saw me.
14. He *sat* in a very comfortable position.
15. Binoy *ran* to catch the bus.
16. Dileep *cried* the whole day.
17. Sushil *sneezed* the moment he smelt the flowers.
18. I *will walk* with you to the bus stand.
19. Tharik *was feeling* lonely and sad.
20. My father *yelled* at me because I broke the glasses.

Academic writing requires the use of correct verb form. These include base form, simple past, and past participle. Depending on how a verb converts from one form to another, it can be placed in two categories. **Regular verbs** form their past tense and past participle by adding "-ed/d, or ied" to the base form (e.g., play→ played, dry→ dried). **Irregular verbs** have unpredictable past tense and past participle forms (e.g., go → drink, drank, drunk).

While a variety of tenses can be used in academic writing, present and past simple and perfect tenses are popular choices. Depending on the chosen tense and its correct form, you will be required to use a variety of regular and irregular verbs as demonstrated below.

- **Present Simple Tense:**
 - Formula: Base Form of Verb
 - Regular verb example: "The researcher conducts experiments to test the hypothesis." (conduct → conducts)
 - Irregular verb example: "The data show a clear correlation between the variables." (show → shows)
 - Contextual use:
- Used to state general truths, facts, or habitual actions.
- Commonly used in literature reviews to summarize existing research findings or to present background information.
 - **Past Simple Tense:**
 - Formula: Base Form + "-d,-ed, -ied" for regular verbs; Irregular past tense form for irregular verbs
 - Regular verb example: "The study analysed the data collected from the survey." (analyse → analysed)
 - Irregular verb example: "The researcher found unexpected results during the experiment." (find → found)
 - Contextual use:
- Used to describe completed actions or events that occurred at a specific point in the past.
- Commonly used in research papers to report methods, results, and findings of past studies.
 - **Present Perfect Tense:**
 - Formula: Have/Has + Past Participle Form of Verb
 - Regular verb example: "Several studies have investigated the effects of climate change." (investigate → investigated)
 - Irregular verb example: "The researcher has written a comprehensive literature review." (write → written)
 - Contextual use:
- Used to indicate actions or events that started in the past and have relevance to the present.
- Commonly used in introductions to discuss the current state of research or in literature reviews to summarize recent findings.
 - **Past Perfect Tense:**
 - Formula: Had + Past Participle Form of Verb
 - Regular verb example: "By the time the paper was published, the research had already been completed." (complete → completed)
 - Irregular verb example: "Before the conference, the presenter had prepared a detailed presentation." (prepare → prepared)
 - Contextual use:
- Used to describe actions or events that occurred before another past action or point in time.
- Commonly used in discussions of methodology or to provide background information on previous research activities.

Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct verb form (base form, simple past, past participle) and tense (present simple, past simple, present perfect, past perfect) for each verb provided in parentheses. Pay attention to whether the verb is regular or irregular.

1. The researcher _____ (conduct) experiments to test the hypothesis. (Present Simple)
2. She _____ (analyse) the data collected from the survey. (Past Simple)
3. They _____ (write) a comprehensive literature review. (Present Perfect)
4. He _____ (present) his findings at the conference. (Past Perfect)
5. The students _____ (study) the effects of climate change. (Present Simple)
6. The team _____ (discover) a new species of plant last year. (Past Simple)
7. Scientists _____ (conduct) various studies on the subject for decades. (Present Perfect)
8. By the time the paper was published, the researchers _____ (complete) their analysis. (Past Perfect)
9. The professor _____ (teach) this course for many years. (Present Simple)
10. The researchers _____ (find) unexpected results during the experiment. (Past Simple)

There are simple rules of making regular verbs like the root or base word is added with –s, -es, or –ies to make other forms. However, irregular verbs change their spelling and pronunciation to when converted into second and third form of verbs.

Base Form	Simple Past Tense	Past Participle
Awake	Awoke	awoken
Be	was, were	been
Bear	Bore	born
Beat	Beat	beat
Become	Became	become
Begin	Began	begun
Bend	Bent	bent
Beset	Beset	beset
Bet	Bet	bet
Bid	bid/bade	bid/bidden
Bind	Bound	bound
Bite	bit	bitten
Bleed	bled	bled
Blow	blew	blown
Break	broke	broken
Breed	bred	bred
Bring	brought	brought
Broadcast	broadcast	broadcast
Build	built	built
Burn	burned	burned
Burst	burst	burst
Buy	bought	bought
Cast	cast	cast
Catch	caught	caught

Choose	chose	chosen
Cling	clung	clung
Come	came	come
Cost	cost	cost
Creep	crept	crept
Cut	cut	cut
Deal	dealt	dealt
Dig	dug	dug
Dive	dived/dove	dived
Do	did	done
Draw	drew	drawn
Dream	dreamed/dreamt	dreamed/dreamt
Drive	drove	driven
Drink	drank	drunk
Eat	ate	eaten
Fall	fell	fallen
Feed	fed	fed
Feel	felt	felt
Fight	fought	fought
Find	found	found
Fit	fit	fit
Flee	fled	fled
Fling	flung	flung
Fly	flew	flown
Forbid	forbade	forbidden
Forget	forgot	forgotten
forego (forgo)	foregone	foregone
Forgive	forgave	forgiven
Forsake	forsook	forsaken
Freeze	froze	frozen
Get	got	gotten
Give	gave	given
Go	went	gone
Grind	ground	ground
Grow	grew	grown
Hang	hung	hung
Hear	heard	heard
Hide	hid	hidden
Hit	hit	hit
Hold	held	held
Hurt	hurt	hurt

Keep	kept	kept
Kneel	knelt	knelt
Knit	knit	knit
Know	knew	know
Lay	laid	laid
Lead	led	led
Leap	leaped/leapt	leaped/leapt
Learn	learned	learned
Leave	left	left
Lend	lent	lent
Let	let	let
Lie	lay	lain
Light	lighted/lit	lighted
Lose	lost	lost
Make	made	made
Mean	meant	meant
Meet	met	met
Misspell	misspelled	misspelled
Mistake	mistook	mistaken
Mow	mowed	mowed/mown
Overcome	overcame	overcome
Overdo	overdid	overdone
Overtake	overtook	overtaken
Overthrow	overthrew	overthrown
Pay	paid	paid
Plead	pled	pled
Prove	proved	proved/proven
Put	put	put
Quit	quit	quit
Read	read	read
Rid	rid	rid
Ride	rode	ridden
Ring	rang	rung
Rise	rose	risen
Run	ran	run
Saw	sawed	sawed/sawn
Say	said	said
See	saw	seen
Seek	sought	sought
Sell	sold	sold
Send	sent	sent

Set	set	set
Sew	sewed	sewed/sewn
Shake	shook	shaken
Shave	shaved	shaved/shaven
Shear	shore	Shorn
Shed	shed	Shed
Shine	shone	Shone
Shoe	shoed	shoed/shod
Shoot	shot	Shot
Show	showed	showed/shown
Shrink	shrank	shrunk
Shut	shut	Shut
Sing	sang	Sung
Sink	sank	Sunk
Sit	sat	Sat
Sleep	slept	Slept
Slay	slew	Slain
Slide	slid	Slid
Sling	slung	Slung
Slit	slit	Slit
Smite	smote	smitten
Sow	sowed	sowed/sown
Speak	spoke	spoken
Speed	ped	Sped
Spend	spent	Spent
spill	spilled/spilt	spilled/spilt
spin	spun	Spun
spit	spit/spat	Spit
split	split	Split
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang/sprung	sprung
stand	stood	Stood
steal	stole	Stolen
stick	stuck	Stuck
sting	stung	Stung
stink	stank	Stunk
stride	strode	Stridden
strike	struck	Struck
string	strung	Strung
strive	strove	Striven
swear	swore	Sworn

sweep	swept	Swept
swell	swelled	swelled/swollen
swim	swam	Swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
thrive	thrived/throve	thrived
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust
tread	trod	trodden
understand	understood	understood
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset
wake	woke	woken
wear	wore	worn
weave	weaved/wove	weaved/woven
wed	wed	wed
weep	wept	wept
wind	wound	wound
win	won	won
withhold	withheld	withheld
withstand	withstood	withstood
wring	wrung	wrung
write	wrote	written